

Fercken's Suggestion

G. J. Fercken, the Armenian convert of the German Baptist brethren, is an interesting man. He has a vigorous intellect, which gives evidence of having been trained. He was a successful missionary at Smyrna until expatriated by the Turkish authorities, and is now located at the historic city of Geneva, Switzerland, where he has founded a church, and is also establishing a successful station in France. He writes frequently for the Gospel Messenger, and what he writes is usually worth reading. His article in the first issue of that paper for the new year is notable for one or two propositions which he may find rather broad for his audience. He thinks that the coming century will witness a universal reversion to the apostolic faith and practice, and that to the German Baptists will be entrusted the glorious mission of "uniting all God's children in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity." As a practical application of this idea he suggests that "Brethren, Quakers, Stundists and Doukhoborts should unite together in one, and endeavor in the dispensation to come, by frequent congresses convened in different parts of the world, to crush out war," etc. This is a grand conception, and perhaps it is no longer premature. That practical results in the direction of abolishing war could be accomplished by the united efforts of the peace sects, admits of very little doubt. But their practical union is more impossible than the early abolition of war. It has only been a few years since the Annual Meeting declined a proposition of the Quakers to join that body in its great work for peace among the nations, giving as a reason that the Brethren church was in itself a complete peace organization, and needed not to join with others to become more effective. So far as its influence upon the world, however, was concerned, it was not effective at all, because it was practically hiding its light under a bushel. While the noble Quakers have been exerting every effort to inoculate the rulers of the world with their ideas, and to gain over to the cause of peace men of weight and influence in all the nations, and also to arouse the conscience of the universal church on this subject, we, the peace Dunkards, of whatever fraction of that body, are hardly known in the world at all. We have done simply nothing. But a great part of this paralyzing conservatism left the church with the Old Orders, and what remains may soon be too weak to hold the church back from what might be, and ought to be, a glorious career of godly influence among the nations of the world in behalf of universal peace and universal brotherhood. A good beginning in this heavenly mission of union and conciliation might be made quite near home, and if an earnest, honest and rational effort

were made, it might not be found so difficult.

If according to Brother Fercken's idea the German Baptist brethren are to lead the world in this great work of peace on earth and good will among men in both a political and spiritual sense, they will find the opening neither narrow nor far away. A practical application of the precept that "charity begins at home" will show them how true it is that he who *wishes* to do good will find the opportunity even at the door.

The Church Organ

Ian MacLaren publishes in the January *Ladies' Home Journal* an extravaganza on the subject of Church Organs which has a reading between the lines of considerable hostility to that melodious piece of sacred furniture. He opens his article with this rather remarkable sentence: "One sometimes wonders how the Quakers are able to look so peaceful and why their worship is so delightful, and I am tempted to think it is because they have no music in their service." His closing paragraph, also in a serious vein, speaks of the wistful regret one sometimes feels "when he remembers a country kirk where a precentor raised the tune with a powerful note, and a congregation of clear-voiced and big lunged men and women took up the air and sang gloriously, with here and there a bass and a tenor, even, perhaps an alto, thrown in to enrich the music."

There are not a few organ and choir monopolized churches in this country, too, where the silence of the great congregation, or the timid, subdued and hesitating whine with which they humbly follow after the music, makes one long for that glorious singing of the old times, when a thousand voices bade far off heaven listen to something almost as sublime as her own celestial symphonies. The hymn is given out. Some brother far to the front, perhaps on the deacon's bench, raises the tune. You can hear his first, his second, perhaps his third note, but after that you hear neither man nor woman, but one great billowy sea of melody, rising and falling, heaving and swelling, and rushing on as if it would surely find some channel that led out of the gross world, and into the paradise. How beautifully its silvery waves bore the worshipping soul into the presence of God. God's people are by their very endowment of grace and wisdom conservators of all good things, and we are sure the days of congregational singing will return again with full munificence of melody. The choir and the organ will find their rightful places, whether inside or outside the church, and joy will be unconfined, and worship unrestrained, as in the great assembly we come up before the Lord.

Faith is the hand wherewith we take everlasting life.—*Latimer*.

Rushing Down

The newspapers tell the story, as indeed they tell many of its kind, where a young girl first deserted her home, secondly plunged for a period into wild revels, thirdly committed suicide. It was a quick run. It was a swift descent into hell. There are many, many such that we do not hear about. The world would not have known this poor girl but for her plunge from off the ragged precipice of a ruined life. The successive stages of the tragedy are well known. It begins with the abominable novel of french realism. That is the first step. The second is to desert the home, with its protecting influences, and so on down, as we have enumerated. There are awful gulfs beneath us, of which in our innocence we may not be aware. And sometimes they open their infernal mouths beneath the unsuspecting home, and, or ever the night comes, a loved one is fallen into the depths, beneath which a yet deeper abyss yawns, threatening to devour. Despair which comes of the awful consciousness of irreparable ruin may safely be trusted to complete the destruction. Soul and body is lost. From one hell the victim plunges into another. Pitying heaven mourns for the lost, but justice might well invoke a portion of its anathema upon the careless parents whose eyes were blind while the destroyer stalked unforbidden in the sacred precincts of the home. "And what I say unto you, I say unto all: Watch."

Encouragement for Christian Workers

The *Chicago Chronicle* makes the following statement as to the manner of D. L. Moody's conversion. It gives encouragement to all Christian workers, and especially to Sunday-school teachers. We do not know what possibilities may be wrapped up in those who sit under our instruction in the Sunday-school class:

As a boy he attended with his mother the Unitarian church in his native town. When he was seventeen he picked up a few meager personal belongings and left home in quest of fortune and fame. He went to Boston, where one of his brothers was a salesman in a small shoe-store. He had an uncle in the same line of business and as soon as he reached the city he sought a position in his uncle's store.

Young Moody rebelled against his relative's advice to go back to the farm, and finally his uncle took him in on condition that his nephew should be governed by his advice, and should attend the Sunday-school and services at Mt. Vernon Congregational church. The boy performed his duties in the store acceptably, but for a time was careless in religious matters. The orthodox sermons that he heard from Sunday to Sunday went over his head, as he had described it. His Sunday school teacher had better success with him, and there soon sprang up a bond of attachment between teacher and pupil. This teacher made a report to the church pastor on young Moody's prospects in the religious life as follows:

"He is very unlikely to become a Christian of clear and decided views of gospel truth, still less to fill any extended sphere of public usefulness."

In due time young Moody applied for membership in the church. The board of deacons questioned him